

Area Contact Leader Spotlight | ANDRINA ROSE

Andrina Rose from Toronto was our spotlight speaker at the Quarterly Meeting for Area Contact Leaders on February 18, 2023. She shared her voice journey and how finding the support she needed has impacted her life.

My name is Andrina Rose. I am a corporate marketing manager with over 25 years' experience.

I always was a go-getter, work harder than anyone and continuously proved myself in various industries as the one who always gets things done.

I have a 20-year-old daughter who is an amazing young lady.

In 2019 I had a disc replaced in my C6-C7 cervical spine. That surgery was needed as I was experiencing excruciating pain in my right arm and my right (dominant) hand did not always work properly. The surgery, for this reason was a success. However, I suffered a complication. My right vocal cord was paralyzed due to some nerve damage and muscle tension dysphonia was also diagnosed. I subsequently went through a few years of assorted therapies, vocal cord injection and finally a thyroplasty. I did not find my doctors very empathic and their bedside manner left a lot to be desired.

My SLP was awesome, she understood how I thought and worked the program around that. She really helped me with the coping/managing of my pain. But I was still in a mental rut. This was changing my life. I didn't socialize, my job is 80% speaking, what the heck am I going to do?? I ended up being on disability for 3 years! I never imagined sitting at home waiting to get better or for a call from a doctor.

Just past my 2-year mark, I started my own search for help. I needed support of some sort but didn't really know that, I've never asked for or sought out help before, I've always been very independent and self-sufficient. I was seeking to thoroughly understand my issues, limits and how to truly cope. This is when I found NSDA. I reached out even though I didn't have SD as I knew someone in the community would be able to direct me somewhere. Around this time NSDA morphed to DI – such wonderful news for me!

My first email was met with warmth and understanding. I participated in the 2021 Walk for Talk and then began my mental healing. Reading the stories on the website really helped me understand that others have this issue too and I'm not alone.



Area Contact Leader Spotlight | ANDRINA ROSE



Andrina in her Walk For Talk gear

I did the 2022 Walk for Talk and through more communications was asked if I wanted to be an ACL in the Toronto area. YES – I jumped at it. If I can help one person not go through what I did I surely will!

In hindsight, I really wish one of my doctors or therapists recommended a support group or NSDA/DI as a resource, unfortunately none of them did but I still found you!

As an ACL my focus is to bring at least awareness to the health professionals in my area so that others can get all the help they need – not just a diagnosis or tests.

I feel so at home and comfortable with this group. It has been life-changing for me – as has this whole medical rollercoaster (as I call it). I am making life changes that benefit not just my physical but also my mental state. I am in a much better place and once again have a positive outlook for the future.